DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 307 256 SP 031 169

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TITLE Problematising Teaching through a "Critical" Perspective on Clinical Supervision.
PUB DATE Mar 89
NOTE 46p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (San Francisco, CA, March 27-31, 1989).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Information Analyses (070)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Change Agents; *Collegiality; *Critical Thinking; Educational Objectives; Elementary Secondary Education; Foreign Countries; *Interprofessional Relationship; *Professional Development; *Teacher Effectiveness; Teacher Evaluation
IDENTIFIERS *Clinical Supervision

ABSTRACT

This paper takes as its starting point the well-known and extensively used process of clinical supervision and shows how what started over 30 years ago as a collaborative process has been harnessed into a sophisticated mechanism of teacher inspection and surveillance. It shows how this co-option has occurred historically through the progressive alignment of clinical supervision with the conservative educational reform movement in schools. It concludes by describing a "critical" perspective through which teachers might not only be able to restore the collaborative intent of clinical supervision, but in the process, enable teachers to regain more control over their teaching. Problematising teaching--creating a narrative text about that teaching and confronting the social, historical, and political agenda expressed in it--are all seen as precursors to the restoration and reclamation of teaching by teachers. (JD)

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Problematising Teaching Through a 'Critical' Perspective on Clinical Supervision

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Paper presented to a symposium on "Counter hegemonic views and practices in teacher evaluation: international perspectives" at the anual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, March 1989

This paper is an abriged and rewritten version of a chapter that appears in Gitlin, A., & Smyth, J., Teacher Evaluation: Educative Alternatives. London & Philadelphia: Falmer Press, 1989.

SP031169

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Problematising teaching through a 'critical' perspective on clinical supervision

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Introduction

This paper takes as its starting point the well known and extensively used process of clinical supervision (Goldhammer, 1969; Cogan, 1973; Smyth, 1986a) and shows how what started out over 30 years ago as a collaborative process has been harnessed into a sophisticated mechanism of teacher inspection and surveillance. I seek to show how this co-option has occurred historically through the progressive alignment of clinical supervision with the conservative educational reform movement in schools. I conclude by describing a 'critical' perspective through which teachers might not only be able to restore the collaborative intent to clinical supervision, but in the process, enable teachers to regain more control over their teaching. Problematising teaching; creating a narrative text about that teaching; and confronting the social, historical, and political agenda expressed in it - are all seen as important precursors to the restoration and reclamation of teaching by teachers.

In the years since it began at Harvard University in the 1960's, clinical supervision has had a chequered history and has taken on a variety of meanings and interpretations, some of them not particularly flattering to teachers. I discuss this history and suggest that current usage of clinical supervision has not only lost the intent of the original model, but generated an overly narrow and technical view of clinical supervision. In the paper I try to recapture the lost tradition commenced by Goldhammer (1969) and build upon it, by proposing a 'critical' view of clinical supervision, in which 'critical' does not mean being negative, carping, or disapproving. Rather, I have in mind Apple's (1975) view of critical as being a radical

process of re-examining our current positions and interrogating the relationships that exist, and how these connect with the social structures from which they emerge (p. 127).

Searching for such an alternative is bound to lead us down the track of discovering how what started out as a process with emancipatory potential, became twisted and tarnished as 'converts' (see Hunter, 1980a) have appropriated the ideas for narrow instrumental ends (Smyth, 1986a). Without endorsing any kind of conspiracy theory I believe the cooption of clinical supervision has occurred as part of a wider deliberate agenda within the so-called "reform movement" in schooling, to reclaim power from teachers and schools and invest it in the hands of the State. I want to look briefly at the awesome nature and extent of the forces that are currently at work reversing the advances teachers have made (at least in some places) over the past couple of decades in gaining greater control over their work. Finally, I want to argue that processes like clinical supervision can help re-build fractured and demoralized school communities by enabling teachers to develop schools into informed and critical communities. This can best occur when a systematic and sequential process of inquiry (similar in many respects to the phased model of pre-observation conference, observation, analysis, post-observation conference, and post conference analysis of Goldhammer's), is followed.

The collaborative, questioning, and problem-posing possibilities fostered in the subsequent clinical supervision relationship when pairs of teachers work together in establishing dialogical communities, is precisely the kind of arrangement that fosters fundamental changes in the pedagogical nature of teachers' work. Conceived and enacted as I describe it here, clinical supervision can actually amount to a form of teacher resistance (Giroux, 1983) which confronts hierarchical and exploitative forms of teacher evaluation. While this result may be far from guaranteed, I believe

that the particular view of clinical supervision discussed offers some hope for the re-construction of what has become a desultory practice.

Distorting the Intentions of Clinical Supervision

Although clinical supervision had its beginnings as a form of teacher collaboration (and continues to be widely used in the U.S.A, as well as in Australia, England and elsewhere), Anderson (1986) was not wrong when he said: "adrenalin flows . . . in almost all discussions of clinical supervision" (p. 17). Looking back over the forty year history of clinical supervision it is hard not to regret that the choice of language had been different. In everyday usage the term clinical conjures up pathological images because of its association with medical matters, and the feeling that at minimum there is a deficiency (or a disease) that has to be remedied. Much of the confusion and ambiguity surrounding the term dissipates when we accept that in this context it refers to the classroom-based process of teachers making sense of and beginning to challenge the complexity, contradictions, and uncertainties that characterise teaching. Clinical supervision was clearly intended to empower teachers to engage one another in discussion, observation, and analysis of teaching " . . in the clinic of the classroom" (Wilhelms, 1973, p. ix). What Goldhammer (1964) was proposing was that teachers confront their distorted perceptions and inaccurate memories along with those sources within the culture (and from within themselves) that tend to bias those perceptions (p. 26). In being sensitive to the limits and the potential of human autonomy, he proposed that we " . . . break away from [our] histories in order that [we] may have more viable futures . . . [What we need, he says, is] a revolution through knowledge and study, of the influences that have shaped [us] and of [our] power to exercise rational control over them." (p. 27). Goldhammer was in a sense arguing for a form of democratic practitioner research, based on 'educative' principles that were entrenched in 'reason'.

It seems that with the passing of time that the meaning and intentions behind Goldhammer's (1969) original conception of clinical supervision have become lost. In the process of actually doing clinical supervision, it seems to have taken on many of the features of a sinister and and in some cases quite sophisticated form of teacher surveillance and inspection. Perhaps we need to acknowledge, as Garman (1984) does, that the habit of evaluating teaching by prescribing what the teacher ought to do is a "ritual so deeply embedded in the culture of the school that we have become resigned to the inevitable" (p. 4). She sugests that:

> The present day versions of clinical supervision ... have been widely interpreted by educators for their own situations. For the most part this is a welcome sign. The questionable part comes when educators begin to alter the basic tenets of the practice in order to fit their own rigid timeframes and mindsets. Clinical supervision is not warmed over ritual. It represents a drastically different form of professional development ... (emphases added, p. 3).

A blatant example is the Hunter(1980a) "teaching skills" model which has widespread use in the U.S.A. and purports to use a variant of clinical supervision, as a way of prescribing what should pass as teaching. Hunter's (1980a) manipulative intentions become clear when she says:

> Conferences designed to improve instruction must be both diagnostic and prescriptive and are more accurately labelled instructional conferences ... [And] ... The objective of an evaluative conference is that a teacher's placement on a continuum from "unsatisfactory" to "outstanding" will be established and the teacher will have the opportunity to examine the evidence used. . . [And] . . . the observer focuses only on those aspects of instruction that were effective and brings those decisions to the conscious awareness of the teacher (emphases added, pp. 408-12).

Hunter's (1985) 'version' of clinical supervision is really nothing of the kind - she calls it "mastery supervision" and in its removal of teacher choice over pedagogy it bears no resemblance at all to the spirit of clinical supervision. Nevertheless, she continues to employ the language and the label of clinical supervision, and her work is construed in some circles as being a variant of clinical supervision. It is worthwhile examining the principles and procedures that lie behind Hunter's model ir order to be clear about how it is fundamentally different from the tenets of clinical supervision. In Hunter's words: "Our clinical supervision model is . . .

derived from learning theory and the cause-effect relationship in teaching and learning" (Hunter, 1980b). In this Hunter's work is clearly part of the current educational reform vanguard in the U.S.A. that believes in the back-to-the basics, discipline-centered curricula, prescriptive teaching, and sequential modular design-based instruction linked to the authority of research. Hunter's model amounts to 'traditional instruction' " . . . [in the form of] large-scale, mandated implementation of a stripped-down, formula-like application of her principles . . . "(Slavin, 1987, p. 57). According to Ceroni (1987), Hunter's work derives its popularity from "its relative simplicity and [the] claim that it is research based . . . [and capable of] being implemented to improve instruction and increase student achievement" (p. 2). In the current climate of simplistic solutions to protracted and complex economic problems, what Hunter proposes is seen as an administratively expedient solution with which to force schools to straight-jacket the work of teachers, and make them responsive to producing a 'product' acceptable to narrow sectional business interests. The result, according to Hazi (1987), is a form of "teacher evaluation [i.e. performance appraisal] incognito" which has a high level of prescriptiveness about what should occur in teaching through its process of checking for the presence of certain attributes of 'acceptable' teaching. Pointing to the ridiculous extremes to which such folly can be carried, Slavin (1987) relates the incident of the physical education teacher in Texas who recieved an unsatisfactory appraisal "because her explanation of volleyball rules didn't include all the steps of a Madeline Hunter lesson ! (p. 56).

Hunter's scheme synically capitalises on the individualistic upwardly mobile career aspirations of some teachers at the expense of their colleagues by co-opting teachers as 'trainers' of other teachers,. What she creates is a cadre of 'accountability and efficiency experts' who see in the process a way of "maintaining and enhancing their positions and paths to upward mobility" (Apple, 1987, p. 213). Not surprisingly teachers regard the Hunter approach as "rigid", "mechanistic", and "anti-

intellectual" (Ceroni, 1987, p. 8) because of the way in which it increasingly treats them as unthinking technicians. Understandably some teachers are opposed to what is involved here. Typical of such hostile reactions, was the teacher who after four days of training, recalled the experience as " . . . the most anti-intellectual experience I ever encountered. What it felt like was analagous to bringing all the great chefs of the world together and teaching them how to boil water" (Gondak, 1986, p. 4).

In the current climate of the swing to conservative educational politics it is not difficult to see how clinical supervision (or purported variants of it) can be used to appear to provide a veneer of respectability for what amounts to the infantile treatment of teachers. Superficially, the Hunter process with its classroom observation and collection of evidence, gives the outward appearances of being benign, neutral and value-free, especially when clothed with the authority of 'science' and 'research'. If all that lay behind the appropriation of clinical supervision in this way was the substitution of 'different' words, matters would be relatively simple. However, by adopting the reformist language of 'improvement', the Hunter movement actually twists the meaning of that term so as to gain support for its purpose which is that of controlling and constraining the work of teachers. Who in their right mind could possibly be against 'improvement'? By focussing exclusively on the means or the technicalities of teaching, the social ends and political purposes of that teaching go unquestioned within the Hunter process. In actuality, of course, the Hunter approach to supervision (and teaching) is riddled with quite explicit values on what constitutes acceptable ways of working with teachers (and in turn, teachers working with students) - it is hierarchical, judgemental, excessivley proceduralised, measurement-oriented to the exclusion of all else, and endorses individualistic relationships based on highly questionable claims to certainty. In sum, it is a narrow recipe approach to both teaching and supervision that is neither sustainable in terms of its alleged research basis

(Gibboney, 1986; Costa, 1984), nor bears any resemblance to the ways teachers actually work in classrooms.

None of this technologisation of clinical supervision has come about by accident. Versions of clinical supervision touted by people like Hunter (and the closing down of teacher-controlled forms of self-evaluation in England and Australia) have come about because of what Shor (1986) claims was a concerted effort by conservatives at the end of the 1960's, particularly in the U.S.A. (but followed closely in Australia, England and elsewhere), to recapture and reassert what they saw as lost control over schools brought about as a result of the progressivism and permissiveness of the 1960's. The move was one designed to re-establish control over school culture, the curriculum, the structure of authority, and the language and genre of debate about schooling (Smyth, 1987a). According to Shor (1986a) this reassertion was made possible by the economic downturn, and was driven by notions of career education and vocationalism which capitalized on the widespread fear of unemployment. It was also characterised by the much vaunted "literacy crisis" and its accompanying call to 'get back to the basics". The attempt was to restore the notion of authority which had been lost and to declare war on "mediocrity"using the secret weapon of the push for (an undefined return to) 'excellence'

According to Shor (1986a) this 'rearmament' of conservative interests has taken the form, at least in the U.S.A., of a deliberate move "to displace the wrong words" and to "teach the right words". Oppostional words like 'peace', 'open access', 'free schools', 'equal rights', 'anti-imperialism', 'civil rights', 'power to the people' (p. 11), were replaced by more conserving words like 'illiteracy', 'tests', ' accountability', 'competence', 'quality', 'excellence', 'basics', and the like (p.11). As Apple (1987) put it, the terrain of the educational debate has been shifted "from a concern with inequality and democratization (no matter how weak) to the language of "efficiency, standards, and productivity" (p. 200). What we are, therefore, witnessing in the large number of national reports on education is an attempt to mouthe the right language,

and through that, orchestrate public opinion so as to create the kind of climate in which to further standardise and control the work of teachers. This amounts to a rehearsing of what Apple (1987b) sees as a repetition of an older strategy: "When larger economic and governmental crises erupt, export the crisis outside the economy and government onto other groups" (p. 210). Lack of competetiveness in the economy, increasing unemployment, unfavourable trading arrangements, and the generally changing nature of labour market relations, are all blamed on the inadequacy of schools and teachers to meet the emerging needs.

It has been this orchestrated chorus by educationally conservative critics of schooling that has produced suppport for a narrow instrumental view of schooling and education and resulted in processes like clinical supervision being seen as a convenient way of ensuring conformity to behaviourally determined indices of teacher competence. As St. Maurice (1987) notes, for this reason critiques of clinical supervision have invariably tended to concentrate on its limitations as a technical process, not upon the power relationships implicit in its form or the real agenda at work legitimating certain forms of teaching while actively denying and discouraging others. In the next section I take up the issue of how we might begin to reclaim the ground lost to the technical experts in teaching, by construing clinical supervision as a way of examining teaching in ways that open up for consideration, contestation and debate the broader context within which teaching and learning occurs.

Becoming 'Critical' Through Clinical Supervision

What is really at stake is whether clinical supervision is to remain a way of controlling, disenfranchising and pushing teachers around, or whether it has other possibilities as an emancipatory process through which teachers are able to assist one another to gain control over their own professional lives and destinies. The issue is whether clinical supervision should be construed only in instrumental terms

as a way of fine-tuning teaching, or whether it is a way for teachers to challenge and transform not only their teaching, but the social and cultural circumstances in which they do it. Technicist interpretations of clinical supervision amount to a conservative political process of perpetuating the status quo (Smyth, 1984a) in which the only change possible is that which occurs within the framework of existing practices and structures. Used in this kind of instrumental way clinical supervision can do no more than aid teachers to do better that which they were already doing; that is to say, trying harder to apply established techniques and rationales, while continuing to endorse the same basic assumptions and practices. What remains uncontested, are the ends of teaching. Means-oriented views like this fail to take account of the purposes to which teaching is directed, and of the moral, ethical and philosophical questions that are central to what teaching is about.

On the other hand, as I have sought to show so far, clinical supervision can be a way of empowering teachers by helping them to regain control of aspects of their lives over which they have been restrained by social or political forces (Fried, 1980). Doing this involves abandoning a "delivery of services" view of clinical supervision, in which remediation is provided to targetted audiences of teachers deemed to be inexperienced, inefficient, incompetent or in need of re-skilling (Smyth, 1986b). The alternative is for teachers to see their classroom actions in relation to the historical, social and cultural context in which their teaching is actually embedded. Acting in this kind of fashion involves individuals and groups reflecting rationally upon their actions, and using these reflections as a basis for altering things (Carr, 1987). This means creating conditions under which teachers, both individually and collectively, can view themselves and their teaching historically; to treat the contemporary events, practices and structures of teaching problematically (and not to take them for granted); and, to examine the surface realities of institutionalised schooling in ways that enable them to clarify for themselves alternative courses of action. Acting critically, therefore, refers to "collaboration in marshalling the

intellectual capacity so as to focus upon analysing, reflecting on, and engaging in discourse about the nature and effects of practical aspects of teaching and how they might be altered" (Smyth, 1985, p. 9). Apple (1975) summed it up when he said of the socially critical perspective:

> It . . . necessitates a serious in-depth search for alternatives to the . . . almost unconscious lenses we employ and an ability to cope with an ambiguous situation for which answers can now be only dimly seen and will not be easy to come by (p. 127).

In practical terms this means teachers engaging in systematic individual and social forms of investigation that examine the origins and consequences of everyday teaching behaviour so they come to see those factors that represent impediments to change. The intent is to overcome the fatalistic view that change in teaching is "impossible for me", and seeing that circumstances can be different from what they are. It means moving from a "passive . . . dependent, [and] adaptive" (Fay, 1977, p. 220) view of themselves and their potentialities, to one in which they are able to "analyse and expose the hiatus between the actual and the possible, between the existing order of contradictions and a potential future state" (Held, 1980, p. 22). In short, it involves teachers becoming oriented to the development of an enhanced "consciousness" of their own circumstances and a political involvement (Carlson, 1987; Lightfoot, 1973) in working towards actively changing the frustrating and debilitating conditions that characterise the work lives of themselves and their students. This may involve, for example, teachers looking carefully at the source of the authority they have over students. If teachers see themselves as servants of the State, then they need to be clear about the extent of their implication in <u>that</u> apparatus and of their role in pursuing the objectives laid down by the State. An unproblematic acceptance of others' objectives can mean that the schools' authority becomes the teacher's authority (Tozer, 1985). This may lead, for instance, to a categorization of students according to 'low' and 'high' ability, with the teaching of vocational skills to the former, while preparing the latter for professional-class jobs. Endorsing the imposition of this kind of hegemony is something which

schools and teachers must vigorously contest. Acting in ways that fail to challenge the trajectory of these forms of hegemony deeply implicates teachers in sustaining the inherent inequities in the status quo, while depriving students of the capacity to "form understandings of themselves and [of] their society that are different from what the dominant class of society want them to understand" (Tozer, 1985, p. 150). The way in which teachers act in respect of their teaching and the structures of society within which it occurs, obviously has implications for whether or not students are able to learn to question the dominant order of society.

What I are claiming, then, is that clinical supervision as I portray it here has to be concerned with fostering forms of teaching that are "critical of current practices and institutions in the sense of showing them to be frustrating [and] based on a false understanding of human need and possibility" (Fay, 1987). Fay (1987) would claim this means simultaneously explaining the social world, while criticizing it, and empowering its audience to transform it. It amounts to revealing how the social order works by showing how [the] constructed order is unsatisfactory to those who live in it, and " . . . [but who do so in] a manner that itself becomes the moving force helping transform this order into something . . . different" (p. 23).

Acting in the 'strategic' (Carr & Kemmis, 1986) manner being suggested here involves teachers actively intervening into their 'life worlds' and asking pointed questions about the historical, social, and political nature of what it is that they do in teaching, and how they might operate differently. Questioning the veracity of things they have become habituated and accustomed to, is bound to be an anxiety-provoking and risky business. But it is only through the process of challenging what it is they do not yet know, that there is any real chance for improvement. What is involved is teachers moving beyond accepting the limitations built into the traditions of their own teaching, to a position in which they are able to understand how the structures of schooling within which they and their students work, are systematically and

hierarchically distorted. At a practical level, this means shifting the emphasis of Goldhammer's (1969) intentions even further in the direction of an 'educative' or 'emancipatory' view of clinical supervision, so as to fit within the framework which has come to characterise what we call clinical supervision today, namely:

(i) conferral prior to teaching (pre-observation conference)
(ii) observation and data collection
(iii) analysis of data
(iv) conferral and disclosure of data about teaching (post-observation conference)
(v) reviewing of the entire process (post-conference review).

While that this general format (which is more like a spiral than a cycle) is robust and extremely useful as a practical and a heuristic device, we need a lexicon or a grammar that is more descriptive of what might occur in a critical approach to clinical supervision. Through this means it may be possible to re-visit the original intent of clinical supervision, while reversing the instrumentalism that has come to characterise its widespread use. The aspects I have want to focus on are as follows:

(a) problematising teaching
(b) observing and creating text about teaching
(c) confronting biography and history
(d) re-focussing and action

(a) Problematising Teaching

Goldhammer believed passionately in the 'intellectual' and 'educative' nature of the teaching act, and of the way in which this should be reflected not only in relationships with students but in the way teachers interact with one another, and how they view teaching differently as a consequence. For him teaching was a tantalising process of problem posing with on-going probing and questioning, such that new levels of understanding and action were always being sought.

To take an illustration (Smyth, 1987b) of what this notion of problematising teaching might look like, I offer the example of two teachers who were using a clinical supervision relationship to focus on the actions of a 'quiet and withdrawn' student in class. The text or narrative they created about this teaching episode revealed that this supposedly quiet child did a lot of muttering to herself. Curious

about this muttering child who appeared to be engaged in work-related activities, they extended their observations to include a range of students across the ability range. The muttering was a prevalent practice, but there was a pattern to it. In the teacher's words:

> Our initial conclusions were that able students verbalised problems to clarify them; not so able students discuss their problems with a neighbour; and weak students rely almost entirely on the teacher for support and legitimation.
> For example:
> "Six plus four must equal ten" (able student to self).
> "Are you sure six plus four equals ten?" (less able student to neighbour).
> "Miss, I think six plus for equals ten. Is that right ?" (weak student to teacher).

Having engaged in this observation, analysis and dialogue, teacher and colleague issued a challenge to the widespread view that to be on-task students need to be silent. They said:

> If our theory is correct it has some very serious implications for teachers who demand total silence, or for remedial teachers who put struggling students in isolated situations so they won't interrupt, or cannot be interupted by others . . . While the validity of our conclusion can be questioned, the increase in our own knowledge of how some students learn is supported by our evidence (p. 47).

What this example highlights is something important about the relationship between reflection and practice, and how teachers can actively intervene in their own teaching so as to challenge the conventional wisdom of established practices. Their hunch about a 'withdrawn' student was quickly dismissed as they became involved in the wider question of what their observation told them about how young children learn, and of how this contradicts general theories upon which teaching is often based. Most significant was the fact that their teaching led them to the point of suggesting alternative courses of action.

Implicit in Goldhammer's original scheme was a particular view of the relationship between theory and practice in teaching. He was concerned with what Fay (1977; 1987) has more recently described as an 'educative' view. According to Fay (1977) to work in 'educative' ways is to have people recognise that repressive and frustrating

social conditions exist " . . . at least partly because people are systematically unclear about their needs and the nature of their social relationships" (p. 206). The claim is that by acquiring knowledge about themselves and their cultural domains, people are able to re-think the extent of their own implication in repressive and self-destructive practices and begin to see where more fulfilling changes might be possible. The intent is to aid people "who are objects in the world in transforming themselves into active subjects who are self-determining" (p. 210). This is in contrast to an instrumental conception of the relationship between theory and practice which is "rooted in the conviction that there are certain sets of naturally recurring general regularities which can be used to achieve one's purposes . . . " (Fay, 1977, p. 203).

In his work with teachers Goldhammer (1966) placed a high premium on "intellectual engagement" (p. 50), by which he meant discouraging dependency and encouraging argumentation, disputation, and "reciprocity . . . such that the gaps in my logic, the faultiness in my thinking, is just as vulnerable to scholarly attack as those in yours" (p. 48). He summed up the kind of intellectualizing he wanted teachers to engage in with these words:

> The vast majority . . . of values and assumptions from which our . . . professional behavior is governed are implicit. They're inarticulate, they're nebulous, they're buried someplace in our guts and they're not always very accessible . . . We can't always rationalize exactly what we're doing in a classroom as teacher. We can't always make explicit the justifications for the acts which we perpetrate in teaching. Now, I think that one hallmark of the kind of intellectual excellence that I'm talking about . . . [is] the major effort [that] must be [made] to bring to conscious awareness the reasons that we have for doing the things that we do as teachers. . . Only after these things have been made explicit, have been brought to the point where you can enunciate the damn things, can we begin to value those that seem to have some . . . integrity and disregard those that seem to be inane (1966, p. 49).

When the rhetoric is removed clinical supervision amounts to ". . . close observation, detailed observational data, face-to-face interaction between . . . teacher [and colleague(s)] . . . (Goldhammer, 1969, p. 54), grounded in a view of the importance of 'inquiry', 'analysis', 'examination', and 'evaluation' that are 'self-initiated and self-regulated' (p. 55). It is a process that regards teaching

problematically in the sense that data collected through observation by a teaching colleague can be ". . . employed to authenticate the existence of certain problems, to make sure they are real, and as bases for articulating previously undefined problems" (Goldhammer, 1969, p. 62).

The kind of intellectual engagement with teaching that Goldhammer (1966) had in mind came in the form of "process confrontation" (p. 78); that is to say, the opportunity for teachers in their interactions with one another about their everyday teaching, to distil from events and patterns, those salient characteristics they regard as being problematic. Teachers become involved in 'improvement', not by becoming "better" but rather by becoming "different" through " . . . abandon[ing] the comforts of well-worn intellectual and professional habits" (p. 63). In part, adopting a problem-posing stance towards teaching means that teachers obtain a more expansive view of what it means to control their own teaching. Control means self-control, in the sense of opening-up new lines of inquiry that force new issues and generate new directions in teaching: "[C]ontrol is a condition that's in a state of becoming . . . Control does not, . . . necessarily mean the closure of the issue or of relevant issues" (p. 94).

This view about the nature of control and the ever-present power relationships implicit in teaching, emerge clearly in Goldhammer's views about the need for students in turn to be autonomous in their learning. Where the relationships between teachers and those to whom they are responsible are disabling, Goldhammer sees a strong likelihood of similar stifling pedagogical relationships between teachers and the way they interact with their students. As he put it:

> One characteristic of a great many traditional classrooms is that so high a premium is placed upon the right answer to questions asked by the teacher or by the textbook . . . that the child comes to live in a world of answers where answers are sort of like dollar bills. . . once you get them you've really got something . . . [T]here seems to be a universe of answers that tend to close off things in our lives rather than to open them. . . [I]t can almost be expressed by saying that . . . in the act of having a question, you're alive. You're alive because there is a reason for moving, a reason for looking, and that maybe each time we get an answer we die a little bit because we're closed off and [are] not impelled to move much. And maybe it follows [if that's true] . . . that by

> putting so high a premium on answers, for the kids, we tend to kill them in the schools, . . . at least intellectually (p. 95).

Goldhammer does not suggest that the observation and data gathering role have to be enacted by a super-ordinate who is wiser, more experienced, or of higher status than the teacher being observed. On the contrary, he suggests that one of the intentions of clinical supervision is to enhance symmetrical relationships between teaching colleagues so as to increase the likelihood of autonomous teacher action emerging as a consequence of informed conferral and dialogue. The kind of dependency implicit in hierarchical relationships was anthetical to Goldhammer's mission. As Goldhammer, Anderson & Krajewski (1980) put it, the role of the in-class observer (or colleague) in all of this, was:

> . . . less a teacher of technique and . . . more a critical dialectician; a mirror; an occasional collaborator in invention; a handmaiden, primarily to the teacher's own strategies; a travelling companion through whatever directions the teacher pursues (p. 135).

By way of contrast, what we are experiencing at the moment in Western educational systems amounts to a major paradigm shift in teaching (Smyth, 1987a). As Schon (1983) has argued, across a range of professions, knowledge based on the 'problem solving' approach of the traditional disciplines is out of step with changing circumstances. He sees such knowledge as no longer being able to 'deliver' solutions on important and protracted social questions. In particular: "The complexity, uncertainty, instability, uniqueness, and value conflicts which are increasingly perceived as central to the world of [current] practice . . . (p. 14), are no longer able to be handled simply by recourse to existing bodies of knowledge or accepted ways of acquiring such knowledge. Rather than engaging in rational processes of resolving problems by choosing from available 'received' knowledge, teachers are raising questions about the relevance of such 'applied' approaches, and whose interests are being served by it anyway (Breinen, 1987). Practitioner-generated knowledge that is embedded in and emerges out of action, is coming to be seen increasingly as the basis for a new and emerging paradigm in teaching (Smyth, 1987a). The emphasis has

shifted from one of supposed universal certainties, to one of 'problem posing' or 'problem setting' in which the agenda is problematising or bringing into question "critical social analysis of the production, circulation and consumption of educational [knowledge] (Smith, 1987, p. 48).

Problematising teaching within the collegial conferral framework of clinical supervision involves the teacher and an observer in using 'public space' (Greene, 1985) prior to actual teaching, to deliberately plan and rehearse how the teacher might inject into teaching, questions that normally go unasked about the content of what is to be taught so that students can begin to develop a sense of "why things are the way they are" and "how they got to be that way" (Simon, 1988). This amounts to working against what Freire (1972) labelled a 'banking' notion of education in which "teachers make deposits of knowledge into the empty accounts of the students' minds" (Shor, 1980, p. 105). Adopting a problematising approach to teaching, however, introduces into teaching a dimension that interrogates, prescriptive forms of knowledge dictated to students. It opens-up for debate the pre-processed and pre-digested nature of such knowledge by questioning the way in which powerful and pervasive myths are "instrumental in explaining events and situations that [prevent] the critical understanding of inequalities in society" (Bensemann, 1978, p. 31). Shor (1986b) argues that we should be striving to continually problematise our teaching so as to "understand existing knowledge as an historical product deeply invested with the values of those who develop such knowledge . . . '(p. 420).

When the curriculum is construed as "normative, neutral and benevolent" then "inequality [and injustice] is presented as natural, just and earned", and the advantages that accrue to the elite continue to be hidden behind the myth of 'equal opportunity' (Shor & Freire, 1987, p. 123). Clearly, the way teachers choose (and are permitted) to treat the curriculum through curriculum frameworks, textbooks,

testing, and official forms of monitoring their work, closely reflects the kind of intellectual activity (or passivity) they foster among their students. Where there is rigid prescription and silence imposed upon teachers in these matters, along with an absence of teacher resistance, the consequence is what Bourdieu & Passeron (1977) label "symbolic violence":

> It is symbolic because it is in the very order of things, not an actual physical beating, but an environment of rules, curriculum, tests, punishments, requirements, correction, remediation. . . which establish the authorities as the ones in charge (Shor & Freire, 1987, p. 123).

It is, therefore, in the actual process of conferral between teachers in clinical supervision prior to their actual teaching, that a safeguard is built in whereby they are able to begin to develop the kind of resisting alliances necessary to reshape the nature of what it is they teach their students. It is here that the limits of the situation are sketched out, prior to being tested in the enactment of the lesson in concrete ways. Rather than feeling that they have 'to go it alone' in situations of curriculum exploration which are perplexing and confusing to them individually, it is here that teachers begin to develop the kind of solidarity with which to progressivley and collectively share the problem of re-defining their teaching content and the way they intend to engage students with it pedagogically. The kind of dialogical relationships that emerge at this stage of clinical supervision enables teachers to see more clearly the 'political' nature of their teaching, and the disabling consequences that accompany bureaucratic intrusions into the classroom, like mandated curricula, prescribed textbooks, 'bench mark' testing, and the like.

Developing a political agenda (Stevens, 1987) within teaching during this problematising phase is not to suggest that the other important aspects of the pre-lesson conferral (Goldhammer calls it the 'pre-observation conference'), should go unattended. Indeed, unless these occur there is a risk that clinical supervision will lack the procedural clarity necessary to make it work. For example, it is important that both teacher and observer arrive at a shared understanding of what is to occur

in the lesson to be observed. The conferral is a unique opportunity to begin the process of collaboratively and intellectually probing the teacher's intentions prior to their enactment. As in the traditional version of clinical supervision (Smyth, 1984b), there is no attempt on the part of the colleague to ursurp the authority of the teacher or to call into question the competence or worth of the teacher. The attempt is rather to help the teacher raise his/her consciousness to questions about why particular content is being taught, how it might be dealt with differently, as well as how and why particular teaching strategies are being pursued, and with what expected effect. It might be summarised as an exercise in mapping the domain, as it were, so that teacher and colleague have a shared basis upon which to continue to dialogue about the nature of concrete educative experiences.

Settling upon a 'focus' for the observation of the teaching that is to follow, is an important part of the pre-lesson agenda, prior to its actual observation. Given what we know about the complexity of classrooms as social sites, and the often simultaneous, competing and unpredictable nature of occurrences in them, deciding upon an observational focus is not always easy. Experience has shown that it is best to be modest in terms of what is considered feasible to observe and collect data upon; usually having a single focus is best. A workable way of handling the negotiation of an observational focus that respects the interests and wishes of the teacher, is to allow the focus to emerge out of discussion about the nature of the content to be taught, the manner in which students are expected to engage with it, and how students are expected to come to understand and experience the world in more 'inclusive' rather than 'exclusive' ways. In other words, regardless of the content to be taught, or the way in which it is to be presented to students, the attempt should be for the focus to broadly connect with issues of justice, fairness, and social change. Teacher and colleague might ask themselves questions along these lines:

- How does the proposed content of the lesson serve certain establised interests, while denying or excluding others ?
- How does the teacher intend to deal with the process of unmasking and demystifying those interests ?

- What part does the particular teaching strategy itself play in endorsing or denying the interests of certain categories of students ?

There are a host of other questions that might be also be asked, but if questions like these can at least begin to inform and frame discussion as pairs of teachers meet to discuss proposed lesson content, teaching tactics, and what might be observed during clinical supervision, then teachers will have begun the difficult process of problematising their teaching. I believe that the scope for inserting this kind of social and cultural critique into teaching is just as possible in teaching the literary and social sciences, as it is in the mathematical and natural sciences.

While it would be nice if some form of social critique were able to commence in all pre-lesson conferrals, we need to be realistic enough to acknowledge that this might not be feasible or possible for all teachers at all stages in their career development. Teacher 'ownership' of the focus and their right to 'call the shots' in selecting the object of that focus, is a paramount consideration. All teachers are at different points in their development as practitioners, and while some may warm readily to these forms of critique, for others, it may be a more gradual process of starting at a somewhat different point. Starting out with particular teaching skills to be improved or a problem to be solved, may be more realistic for some. Examples of the latter might include:

> . . . the type and distribution of teacher's questions; the effect upon students of using new forms of group work; the way in which the teacher reacts to and handles classroom-control problems; the clarity with which the teacher provides directions to students about learning tasks; the reactions of students to co-operative group work activity; verbal interaction patterns between the teacher and students, and among students; the way the teacher provides individual praise or criticism; the way the teacher monitors which students contribut to class discussion; and, the effect of using some new teaching approach or idea (Smyth, 1984b, p. 8).

On those occasions where teachers start out looking at 'technical' aspects of their teaching, it may be that through analysing and dialoguing (at the confronting stage to be discussed shortly), that they begin to see where other possibilities might lie. Tripp (1987) gives a nice example of how this might happen. He cites the instance of a teacher who started out with a problem to be solved: "John didn't finish his work

again today. Must see he learns to complete what he has begun" (p. 28). Through dialogue and analysis this teacher was able to come to see the problem in a quite different light, and was prompted to ask further questions like:

> . why doesn't John finish his work ?
> . why should he finish it ?
> . how does he see the tasks demanded of him ?
> . are the tasks of the right kind, quality and quantity ? (p. 29).

Rather than remaining with the question of "how can I get John to finish his work?", she was able to come to see that the more important question was "why must John finish his work before going onto the next task?" It was her own unquestioned professional history as a teacher that had prevented her from asking the "why" questions - she had become fixated at the "how" level. Why was it that she stopped John from starting anything new until the work he had begun was complete. As Tripp (1984) points out, she was "teaching on autopilot". In the case of John's unfinished work it can be argued that:

> In everyday life outside the classroom we continually leave unfinished what we have begun, so how is it that we are in a position of having to enforce upon . . . students the rule that they must finish one thing before they can go onto the next. Where did that rule come from, and when is it necessary ? (Tripp, 1984, p. 28).

As Tripp points out, the issue on this occasion has more to do with the hidden curriculum of schooling. For reasons of orderliness and the general smooth running of the school, it was seen to be desirable that teachers have students complete tasks in a linear fashion - there was no educational rationale for this requirement.

In sum, the particular collegial process started during the pre-lesson conferral, with its declared political agenda, enables teachers to begin to exploit what Wirth (1987) has called the "cracks and the openings" surrounding teaching and through which alternative teacher-driven democratic reforms in education will be possible.

(b) Observing and Creating Text about Teaching

The commitment of the colleague in clinical supervision is not, therefore, primarily one of rating or passing judgement, but rather more like that of a consultant. The role is one of helping to create a narrative or descriptive text about teaching, on the way to assisting the teacher to penetrate the taken-for-grantedness that surrounds teaching. The colleague does not come to this task with a tabula rasa to be inscribed with the teacher's agenda. Both have different histories, assumptions and values about teaching and the purposes of teaching, that need to be respected, articulated and clarified in the course of their unpicking of one another's teaching. Built into the original notion of clinical supervision was a way of respecting the views of others ans acting against hegemonic tendencies. What this amounts to in practice is a form of reciprocity that takes expression in a preparedness by both parties to having their teaching observed, critiqued, and reconstructed, if necessary. The function of text creator (or data gatherer) is regularly reversed as colleagues enact the respective role for one another. The presumption is that there will be regular cycles such that at some times the teaching of one party will be observed, while the colleague acts as data gatherer and 'critical friend' (Ingvarson, 1986,), while on other separate occasions, those roles will be switched or reversed. By this means it is possible to avoid what might otherwise be a double standard in preaching asymmetrical power relations, while in fact having what amounts to a hie¬archical arrangement where the work of only one party is the object of analysis.

It is to be emphasised that if clinical supervision is to be fundamentally different from other hierarchical forms of evaluation, that there must be a regular interchange of roles, such that:

> Teacher A - enagages in teaching, while -
> Teacher B - observes, gathers data and creates text about A's teaching.

And later, on some other occasion:

> Teacher B - engages in teaching, while -
> Teacher A - observes, gathers data and creates text about B's teaching.

While the role of the observer (colleague) is akin to that of 'another pair of eyes', this is certainly not to suggest that the observer has any kind of monopoly over interpreting what the text means, or how it might be challenged or changed. Both teacher and colleague do that in a context that is characterised by reasoned dialogue. What is important to note is that this must emerge out of the reconstruction of the context of the teaching, that it happens in a convival environment, and that it is not imposed as a consequence of administrative fiat in an attempt to arrive at some homogenous standard of teaching. At the same time, questions about whose interests are being served by the process should be open to question and debate.

The view that the "two heads are better than one" need not necessarily lead to the parties simply reinforcing one anothers' professional ideologies and sharing their collective ignorance (Winter, 1987). Nor need it lead to action that is denigrating, or in which people feel they have to be harsh and derogratory about one another's practices. The attempt is rather one of raising questions about the ideas that sustain practice (Winter, 1987, p. 110) so that a reflective stance is adopted in which more self-evaluative ways of working become increasingly likely. In this sense, clinical supervision is a form of 'assisted self-evaluation' that acknowledges leaving teachers to their own devices, to somehow mysteriously develop and flourish, is about as unhelpful as forms of close and sanction-ridden surveillance. Teachers need instead a form of collaboration that actively enables them to intellectually react to new ideas, rather than simply acquiescing to them as is so often the case.

The essence of clinical supervision is therefore a model by which teachers can confer with one another in working towards breaking down the disabling isolation and alienation that has come to characterise teaching (Flinders, 1988). But it is a lot more than just a way of promoting idle chatter, or fixing what is wrong in teaching. Because it focusses directly on pedagogical practice and on creating a text about that practice, it provides an avenue through which teachers can begin to raise pertinent questions about issues to do with equality, justice, and morality in teaching and

schooling and whose interests are really being served by particular organizational, pedagogical and administrative practices. To that extent, it is a process that is as much about questioning the culture and structure of schooling, as it is with raising questions about the practicalities of teaching. Ritualism, ceremony, and habitual observances persist in our teaching and need to be continually scrutinised and questioned. Creating a narrative and generating a descriptive text about a particular shared enactment of teaching provides scope for conferral between colleagues focussing on the 'who', 'what', and 'when' of pedagogical practice (i.e. the practicalities of teaching) as well as how these came to be constructed (i.e. the wider culture and structure of schooling). Arguing the need to create a text about teaching as a central element to its analysis, Garman (1986) has found that the importance of a 'record of the scenario' or 'stable data', is a crucial pre-requisite in unmasking the agenda that lies embedded within teaching. Where teachers enter into such an analysis of teaching through clinical supervision Garman (1984) found that they were able to avoid the situation of having to rate one anothers' performance according to arbitrary criteria.

Creating a written descriptive account of what actually occurs during teaching (as distinct from arriving at an impressionistic interpretation, or one done for purposes of rating or formal evaluation, provides teachers themselves with an account they can use to dialogue and interrogate the critical relationship between what transpires in their teaching and their classrooms, and its relationship to the wider cultural and political life that shapes and informs schooling. Without that account, limited and selective though it may be, it is not possible to recall teaching in terms that enable the richness and complexity to be adequately addressed. Besides, description is an important starting point in teachers owning and analysing their teaching. As Mishler (1986) put it, " . . . one of the significant ways through which individuals give meaning to their experiences is [in] organiz[ing] them in narrative form" (p. 118). The rationale is that before teachers can confront

themselves and their teaching in the sense of asking poignant questions about the nature, consequences and situatedness of their classroom practices, they first need to have a somewhat stable image (Garman, 1986) of what is occurring in respect of their teaching. Being clear about the elements (the 'who', 'what', 'when', and 'where') of their teaching means that they are more likely to have something concrete with which to enable them to dialogue as to how their consciousness was formed in the first place, and what political conditions continue to limit and constrain them from working differently in the future.

Arguing for a descriptive retrieval of teaching in this way makes us especially mindful of the way in which observations of practice can degenerate into reductionist accounts characterised by discrete bits of unrelated behavior. This is not so much a problem of observation and recording of teaching per se, as it is an epistemological one of how to penetrate those accounts with the 'right' sort of questions. The intent should certainly not be one of seeking to objectify accounts of teaching in disinterested and allegedly neutral ways. Rather, the intent is to capture some kind of record or manifestation of the symbols, language and rituals of the enactment of teaching. The usefulnes of this record lies in its capacity to open-up for contestation and debate the nature of the habitual, as well as the hidden power relations in teaching. Greene (1985) expressed it in terms of the creation of 'public space' whereby teachers and others with an interest in schooling, are able to break with their own enclaves and enter into dialogue with one another. In her words, such narratives should establish ". . . a space, a site for dialogue about how . . . various meaning structures relate to one another and the way in which the cultural situation is understood" (p. 13).

It is through the creation of artefacts of this kind that 'name their world' (Freire, 1972), that teachers come to do what Giroux (1987) claims is vitally important for all who claim to be educators, namely, " . . . shap[ing] collectively the ways in which time, space and knowledge organize everyday life in schools" (p. 7). For it is only by

being articulate about 'what is' that teachers are able to be clear about 'what might be'. Such artefacts collected by teachers will not only help them to grapple with and understand the messages hidden in commercial text-books and prescribed curricula, but it also helps them to uncover the nature of everyday classroom relations, teacher talk, and alienation that are specifically supported by privileged groups both inside and outside of schools.

At a practical level there are some pointers that can be taken into account in enacting the observation and creation of text. Observation is quite distressing for most teachers. The reasons for this are not hard to discern. It is generally not the observation per se that causes anxiety for most teachers, but the sanction-ridden ways in which information gleaned from such observations is used against teachers in punitive ways. The example below, cited by a professor of education (Eggleston, 1979) many years after his teaching had been observed by an inspector for evaluation purposes, makes the point about the malevolent intent:

> I can still vividly recall after 25 years my first General Inspection. Form 5b were wrestling with the structure and physiology of the vertebrate eye. Vitreous humour flowed freely over the laboratory benches. At one point the class lapsed into a metaphysical exposition concerning the existence of the 'phantom' made visible by gently poking the inner corner of a closed eye. What my Inspector made of this activity was and remained beyond my ken. He uttered four words during 45 minutes, 'good morning' and 'thank you'. There may be, lodged in the archives of the DES a more articulate report of the Inspector's observations, perceptions and judgements of the events of that possibly unique occasion. But any expectation I might have had that I would be the recipient of feedback rich in pedagogical insight was not realised (p. 41).

Quite apart from the obvious need for the involvement of the teacher in selecting the focus for his/her observation, along with participating in the method of documentation to be used in creating a text of his/her own teaching, the way clinical supervision has been construed here has the added inevitability of disclosure, compared with what occurs in traditional forms of teacher evaluation. Being able to jointly create and deconstruct the account of teaching is important primarily because of the way in which it works towards restoring the ideal of asymmetrical

power relationships. It is worth stressing that this is an ideal to be strived for rather than an absolute state to be arrived at.

Arriving at a credible textual reconstruction of classroom phenomena requires a willingness to at least temporarily suspend judgement (about the desirability or otherwise) of the observed events. What the observer is trying to do is to render as 'descriptive' an account as possible, keeping in mind that we all observe through some kind of tinted perceptual lenses (beliefs, experiences, expectations, etc.). This is not to suggest that the process of 'fact gathering' is separate and isolated from the values, ethical and moral practices of teaching, or that such facts are endowed with any kind of "prescriptive force" (Winter, 1987, p. 113) - clearly that is not the case. The argument centres on the claim that what participants in the clinical supervision process are doing is temporarily holding in abeyance ". . . pragmatic interpretations of the job-at-hand" (Winter, 1987, p. 110) so that theoretical reflection becomes possible.

For example, a grade 4 teacher had her clinical supervision colleague record information about how children collaborated with one another in a language task, while the teacher 'taught' the remainder of the class. She was curious about the nature and extent of collaboration in a small group when she was absent from it. Excerpts of the children's dialogue were as follows:

> "C'mon, let's get going . . . " [student eager to get the group started]
> [another student] "You don't start a sentence with 'and' ".
> [one student to another] "Why do you use that word?"
> [student chastising another] "That's a common word. Let's find a better one".
> [student to group when not sure of answer] Let's ask Miss ....No. Let's not go to the teacher. She said to go onto the next one [student negotiating with classmate].

When the teachers revisited the account of which these snippets of conversation were a part, they were able to discern instances in which students were harsh on one another, did not work in ways inclusive of the views of others, were domineering, and not open to possible alternative suggestions from others. Yet, the teachers were also able to see in their account that at times the students had been self-sufficient,

and were able to reason and justify to one another why they should work in certain ways. The data enabled the teacher to see more clearly that she was caught in a dilemma - while she wanted the children to help one another, when left to their own devices the children modelled adult forms of domination that were an unavoidable part of her own teaching, and which were built into the very fabric of teaching. Her way of seeking to resolve this dilemma, in consultation with her colleague was to work towards making student collaboration a more regular and prominent feature of her teaching, as well as having the students see her collaborating with her colleague in teaching the class. As a result of this experience they resolved to collect more information about how children react in these situations over time. They also concluded, as did Winter (1987), that the descriptive accounts do have a place in the dialectic between reflection and practice, as they explored a new idea they wanted to include in their pedagogical repertoire.

(c) Confronting Personal Biography and Professional History

Although he did not use the language of confrontation, Goldhammer (1969) was concerned about getting teachers to 'confront' their teaching. He was not concerned with confrontation in the sense of aggressiveness or hostility, but rather teachers coming face-to-face with the realities of their own teaching. It is the ideals, the practices and their heritage that are being confronted, challenged and questioned rather than the competence of individuals or their personalities. In suggesting that teachers confront themselves and how it is they have come to appropriate certain ideas about teaching, the suggestion is that they move beyond the habitual, the unquestioned, and the ritualistic in a way that enables them to better see the social and historical nature of those practices. One way of developing the kind of self-confrontation necessary, is to foster a process of systematic description, disclosure and discussion with a trusted colleague. This means that the teacher and colleague become involved in a process of asking questions both about her/himself, as well as about the process of teaching and how it came to be constructed the way it is.

As Goldhammer portrayed it, forms of in-class supervision that amounted to rating teachers, ignored the importance of the historical, social, and emotional aspects of being (and becoming) a teacher, because they lacked a sense of 'educational' values. Unco-ordinated strategies of one-shot visits into classrooms by people who bore the labels of 'supervisiors', were as ineffectual then, as they have always been. They failed to get behind the superficialities and the habitualness of classroom practices and were preoccupied with shaping classroom practices according to pre-formulated images of the way teaching 'should be'. There was no sense of teaching developing according to defensible and debatable moral and ethical principles. What was needed instead were processes that transcended the 'economic watchdog' mentality of existing forms of supervision, to ones that acknowledged the importance of classroom-based face-to-face dialogue between teachers about the nature of their work and the social, political and economic conditions that sustain and frustrate it. This meant enhancing an understanding of the social nature of the teaching act, and of how it related to and was part of a much broader economic and political life. Because schooling is about shaping and controlling the lives of the young by those who weild power, then schooling becomes heavily imbued with economic and political agenda, disclosed or otherwise.

Goldhammer's vision was, therefore, to free teachers from the threatening, hierarchical, autocratic, and administratively-bound contexts of traditional forms of supervision, by enabling them to see through reason and argument, how they might strive for more personally and professionally rewarding possibilities in teaching. He was as much concerned with the 'inner' turmoil in teachers' minds, as he was with the 'outer' forces that manipulated and shaped them. Above all Goldhammer saw clinical supervision as a method for questioning and challenging the authoritarian and exploitative ways in which schools and classrooms were organised. He was concerned about stripping away the rituals and observances that

posed such powerful barriers to understanding how teaching has come to be the way it is. On one occasion he put it in these words:

> Authoritative teaching and the content curriculum, to which it is handmaiden, result in certain advantages to the scholastic status quo, namely, the reduction of students to a condition of docility, dependency, and ignorance: that is, a condition in which they are non-threatening. In such a system, the teacher is invariably king of the mountain; because the subject matter, the questions, the answers, the books, and the tests are his, and because the students are really in class by his sufferance, the teacher exists in a universe that is almost perfectly free, internally, from competition or attack . . . [I]t would seem, schoolmen know that ritualism is one of the institution's most powerful means for ensuring conformity and obeisance, both of which are required for institutional stability and duration. One might isolate, as the school's crowning achievement, its almost absolute success in making so many people accept so much on faith, the parents and teachers no less than the learners. Collectively, the rituals of school life combine to form a penumbral mystique (1969, p. 26).

In the kind of confrontation that is necessary to transcend this kind of situation, teachers work with other teachers non-hierarchically, respecting the dignity and human worth of one another's perspective, while challenging the bases upon which one anothers' perspectives have been formed. In its original form, clinical supervision endorsed a quite deliberate set of values that regarded teachers as autonomous and knowledgeable, capable of working collaboratively to expose their own dilemmas and sense of the inconsistencies in their teaching, while tackling the incompleteness of their assumptions and beliefs about the wider possibilities inherent in the process of schooling.

In many ways what is being suggested here is akin to what Winter (1987) describes as combining "the moment of practice with the contrasting moment of theoretical reflection, rather than merely oscillat[ing] between them" (p. 110). The argument is that in processes like clinical supervision reflection needs to join teaching in a dialectical relationship that does more than highlight inadequacies. The key to this is not to introduce new and different concepts from 'outside' ". . . but to question the reflective basis on which practice is taking place and to recall the real possibilities which practice is choosing, on this occasion, to ignore" (p. 112). It is

what is passed over in teaching and regarded as not deserving of a second thought, that needs to be excavated and celebrated by processes like clinical supervision.

It should also be said that although it is a model that is solidly located in the practice of teaching, there has been much confusion (some of it mischevious), restricting the model to that of correcting deficiencies in the practicalities of teaching. Such a narrow view precludes clinical supervision being used to pursue wider moral, ethical and political questions to do with justice and equity within teaching. That the means rather than the ends towards which teaching is directed, have tended in some quarters to be the focus of clinical supervision, is more an indictment of the way in which the model has been distorted by others, than a fundamental flaw in the model itself. How to more adequately sefeguard against that, is a matter to be looked at shortly. Notwithstanding, what is clear is that the ideas that have come to be known as clinical supervision, amount to: a discursive and dialogical way in which teachers can question their intentions and confer with one another before the teaching of one is observed; it is a way in which a text can be created about that teaching for further collaborative interrogation; and it provides an opportunity for a re-convening after the observation to reconstruct and confront what has occurred. All of this occurs within a circumstance where the opportunity exists for the participants to periodically review the efficacy of the process itself, through post-conferral discussions.

None of this is to suggest that Goldhammer's conceptualization was without some quite severe problems and limitations. There is much that Goldhammer said, as well as what he left unsaid, that is deserving of challenge. In being less than deliberate, insistent and unequivocal about the nature of the power relationships, he hedged around the issue of whether teachers can act as informed and competent colleagues for one another. The consequence is that although he may have believed in the nature of egalitarian relationships, his equivocation leaves it open for those who wish to use clinical supervision in hierarchical, instrumental and exploitative

ways. The result has been large numbers of teachers regarding clinical supervision as being so tainted as to be avoided at all costs. The reasons for this are clear enough, for as St. Maurice (1987) put it, "the gaze is assymetrical: the subject-as-object may seem powerless to gaze back and question its majesty and authority" (p. 246). Where clinical supervision is 'done' to a teacher by someone in the administrative hierarchy what goes uncontested are the ethics and morality of a largely female workforce in schools being inspected and evaluated by a cadre of males - already existing gender imbalances in teaching and the administration of schools are, therefore, solidified and reproduced.

Another legacy of Goldhammer's vision of clinical supervision that is proving especially difficult to dislodge is its behaviourist view of teaching. The psychological paradigm he worked within, accepted unquestioningly the idea of individual deficits that had to be rectified by diagnosis and remediation. Such entrenched views of individualism and treatability obviously get in the way of teachers viewing their teaching in socially constructed terms. As long as this view remains dominant teachers are trapped within a fault-finding mentality in which they are unable to see that problems in their teaching are the consequence of complex forces that lie considerably beyond their classroom walls. This 'blame the victim' (Ryan, 1970) approach that targets individual teachers as the cause of school and societal problems, puts quite severe constraints on wider dialogue within school communities. The "two heads are better than one" approach (Winter, 1987) that can so easily be ascribed to clinical supervision is an exceedingly constricted and narrow view of collaboration. In much the same vein, Goldhammer's emphasis on 'objectivity', 'neutrality', and 'improvement' are also manifestations of a misguided view of the route by which teachers might gain control over their teaching - in reality, such notions serve to reinforce the status quo which is tilted severely against teachers and students in favour of dominant interests outside of schools.

In considering the efficacy of these various criticisms it should be borne in mind that they were ones that worried Goldhammer (1969) as well, and although he could not surmount them, he was sensitive to the possibility that things might be different in the future. In his words, "Clinical supervision is begun, but not nearly completed. Its final form will differ substantially from its present ones, and I would be gratified for this writing to guide its transfiguration" (p. ix).

As the critical theorist Mead (1934) succinctly put it, we are all to some degree both the creators and the products of our own history. Mead was arguing that on some occasions we have an important and dramatic effect on the way events unfold, while on other occasions we seem to be swept along and trapped by the course of events seemingly outside of our control. In reality what this means is that we are continually struggling to survive in a world in which we have certain purposes, desires, and needs, but our capacity to satisfy them is continually being shaped and re-shaped by the constraints within which we are required to work and live our lives. The challenge, therefore, is to continually be involved in the struggle of trying to 'disorient' (Berlak & Berlak, 1981, p. 230) ourselves so as to confront what is considered normal, natural, or taken-for-granted. This is only possible when we are able to develop some distance from our teaching, and begin to locate ourselves in it. It involves adopting Greene's (1973) stance of 'teacher-as-stranger' and "looking inquiringly and wonderingly on the world in which one lives" (p. 267). Put somewhat more expansively:

> It is like returning home from a long stay in some other place. The homecomer notices details and patterns in his environment he never saw before. He finds that he has to think about local rituals and customs to make sense of them once more. For a time he feels quite separate from the person who is wholly at home in his ingroup and takes the familiar world for granted. Such a person . . . ordinarily "accepts the ready-made standardized scheme of the cultural pattern handed down to him . . . as an unquestionable guide in all the situations which normally occur . . . The homecomer may even have been such a person. Now, looking through new eyes, he cannot take the cultural pattern for granted. It may seem arbitrary to him or incoherent or deficient in some way. To make it meaningful again, he must

> interpret and re-order what he sees in the light of his changed experience. He must consciously engage in inquiry (p. 267-8).

At the beginning of this paper I alluded to Goldhammer's sensitivity to the need to struggle against our own personal as well as our professional histories. I want to return to that notion here, and suggest that it is when teachers begin to ask a number of questions of themselves and what they do based on the text they have created about their teaching, that they engage in unravelling their own histories and seeing what has 'caused' them to become the type of teacher they are. While as Fay (1987) points out, this process of knowing ourselves can never reach any finality because it is always unfolding and continually being revised, any ideal which falls short of this fails to take account of the way people change themsleves. In his words, although we are all " . . . pressured to behave in particular ways by [our] physical environment and by the structures of power in [our] social arrangements, it is [we] who change [ourselves] by internalizing new conceptions of self and society, new possibilities of action, and by incorporating these in social practices and relations" (Fay, 1987, p. 52). In Fay's terms, it is the limits to clarity and autonomy that have to be continually challenged and worked against. At a practical level, this might mean teacher and colleague asking the following kinds of questions in the post-lesson conferrals, as they engage with the data they have collected about teaching:

- where do these practices come from historically ?
- whose interests are served and denied by these practices ?
- what conditions sustain and preserve these practices ?
- what power relationships between teachers, students and parents are expressed in them ?
- what structural, organizational, and cultural factors are likely to prevent teachers from engaging students in alternative ways ?
- indeed, what alternatives are available ? (Smyth, 1987b).

It is when teacher and colleague pursue questions which impinge upon whose knowledge is accepted as appropriate in the classroom, whose values infiltrate the curriculum, and in what ways the very notion of curriculum itself is tied to technical control, that they begin the process of unravelling the text they have created about teaching. For example, they will likely have begun to confront such fundamental questions as:

. why do we insist on external rewards and punishments to make kids learn ?
. why do we define the 'good' kids as the 'quiet' kids ?
. why do we insist on equating 'workbook work' with 'reading' ?
. why do we regard 'on-task time' as synonmous with 'learning' ?
. why do we accept that 'getting through ther material' should be the prime goal of teaching ? Indeed, where did this notion come from, and how is it related to efficiency in factories ?

It is questions like these that put the focus on the 'why' of teaching, that enable teachers to uncover the awesome extent of the habitual in teaching. There is so much in teaching that is deeply embedded in the mythology of the work that goes unquestioned. Williamson (1985), for example, found in her own teaching that when she gave students space to think and talk, the unexpected happened. The rebellious kids were the most talkative and the most perceptively critical, and the kids we label the 'good kids' were the most reluctant to participate. Perhaps, she concluded, this speaks eloquently to the enculturation process that goes on in schooling generally that teaches some students that it pays to be quiet even when invited to be openly critical.

Teacher and colleague in their post-lesson conferral might also ask themselves questions about such practices as 'ability grouping', if they use it, and whether they are using it as a utilitarian way of more efficiently handling diverse student skills and abilities; they might question their awareness of the way in which such practices actually stigmatize kids. If they have a concern about the allocation of time between students, they might pose the kind of questions that Berlak & Berlak (1981) suggest:

. what difference does it make if one gives equal time to each reading group or more time to the 'low' group ?
. why do I allocate my time this way ?
. is this pattern really a response to [central office] policy - especially when other allocate time differently (p. 245).

If they insist upon 'quietness' in the classroom, is this because they believe that there are sound pedagogical reasons why pupils work better on their own, or is it because this approach fits better with school policy and the smooth general running of the school as an organization ? Are they aware, for example, that:

> We often make children do things that no one would expect adults to do in their jobs. Most adults get to talk to each other when they do work, but not kids. Most adults also don't like being told exactly what to do, where to go, how to think, or what to think every minute of the day, but this is exactly what we expect from kids in school (Goodman, 1984, p. 16).

Some of these are notions that have widespread and unquestioned status in teaching. Teachers rarely bother to explore or challenge their veracity, and as Rudduck (1985) claims, if there is anything that teaching is vulnerable to ". . . it is the flattening effect of habit" (p. 124). This is where the challenge of the post-lesson conferral implicit in a critical approach to clinical supervision can elevate teaching to the level of an examined activity. Habitual and unquestioned activity is seductive to the extent that it is " . . . soothing, non-productive and anxiety-free" (p. 124). Rudduck's claim is that what is needed most in teaching are ways of rescuing at least part of teaching from the predictability of routine.

What this involves, of course, is an element of discomfort, even threat. Reality for most of us is that unless we feel uncomfortable, shaken, or forced to look at ourselves and our circumstances, then there is little likelihood of change. It is far easier to accept our current conditions and adopt the line of least resistance. This point is made in the following example, from Lampert (1985). Although this example is one of a teacher reflecting on her own teaching in an individualistic way, and to that extent may not have the benefits to be expected from colloborative confrontation with a colleague, it is nevertheless useful to illustrate the point about the way personal/professional histories need to be confronted and penetrated. Lambert has reached a point in the analysis of ther teaching where she has encountered quite perplexing 'pedagogical problems', as she calls them. She has been socialised over many years into accepting that teaching occurs in certain ways, but when she examines the descriptive text of her teaching (the who, the what, the when , and the where), she finds that there are aspects of the situation that severely constrain and limit her actions. It is in these very structural constraints themselves, that she sees need for change. Lampert (1985) has come to the

realisation that teachers enact the role of brokers of contradictory interests. Paradoxical though it may seem, it is in locating such knowledge in the relations and discourses of teaching itself, that the greatest prospects lie for teachers to to redeem their work from the imposition of experts (Smith & Zantiotis, 1988). It is they who have control through the practical moral judgements they exercise on a daily basis. Even though Lampert (1985) has embarked on the difficult task of unpicking the text of her <u>own</u> teaching on this occasion, I suggest it may be easier when teaching colleagues collaborate in helping one another to 'see' what is happening:

> In the classroom where I teach fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-grade mathematics, there are two chalkboards on opposite walls. The students sit at two tables and a few desks, facing in all directions. I rarely sit down when I am teaching except momentarily to offer individual help. Thus the room does not have a stationary "front" towards which the students can reliably look for directions or lessons from their teacher. Nevertheless, an orientation toward one side of the room did develop recently in the fifth-grade class and became the source of some pedagogical problems.
>
> The children in my classroom seem to be allergic to their peers of the opposite sex. Girls rarely choose to be anywhere near a boy, and the boys actively reject the girls whenever posible. This has meant that the boys sit together at the table near one of the blackboards and the girls at the table near the other.
>
> The fifth-grade boys are particularly enthusiastic and boisterous. They engage in discussions of math problems with the same intensity they bring to football. They are talented and work productively under close supervision, but if left to their own devices, their behavior detiorates and the bully one another, tell loud and silly jokes, and fool around with the math materials. Without making an obvious response to their misbehavior, I developed a habit of routinely curtailing these distractions from the lesson by teaching at the blackboard on the boys' end of the classroom. This enabled me to address the problem of maintaining classroom order by my physical presence; a cool stare or a touch on the shoulder reminded the boys to give their attention to directions for an activity or to the content of a lesson, and there was no need to interrupt my teaching.
>
> But my presence near the boys had inadvertently put the girls in "the back" of the room. One of the more outspoken girls impatiently pointed out that she had been trying to get my attention and thought I was ignoring her. She made me aware that my problem-solving strategy, devised to keep the boys' attention, had caused another, quite different problem. The boys could see and hear more easily than the girls, and I noticed their questions more readily. Now what was to be done?
>
> I felt that I faced a forced choice between equally undesirable alternatives. If I continued to use the blackboard near the boys, I might be less aware of and less encouraging toward the more well-behaved girls. Yet, if I switched my position to the girls' side of the room, I would be less able to help the boys focus on their work. Whether I chose to promote <u>classroom order</u> or <u>equal</u>

> opportunity, it seemed that either the boys or the girls would miss something I wanted them to learn (pp. 178-9).

A key point to be taken from this is Lampert's (1985) implicit message that teaching-as-text is not something that can or should be treated as 'given'. It is, after all, only in the 'reading' of this text (that is to say, in its deconstruction and the extraction of its message systems) that the contradictory discourses that plague teachers' lives, become evident. It is as teachers struggle to "extraordinarily re-experience the ordinary" (Shor, 1980) that they come to see the entrenched and oppressive nature of the social forces that produce the contradictions in their teaching. It is in demystifying the wider social forces operating in teaching, that teachers begin to construct a 'new' text more of their own making whereby the social relations are both more educative and democratic.

While Lampert could have benefitted from exploring with other teachers how her isolation had come to make her the way she was, and why it was that she regarded 'equal opportunity' and 'order' as being simultaneously important, what is clear is that even experienced teachers need to be continually working at 'overcoming the limits of experience' (Buchmann & Schwille, 1983). Put another way, the constructions of reality that our senses tell us are happening around us, need to be subjected to continual refutation and question. Immersion in the concrete and practical can too readily mean an unquestioning acceptance of matters at face value, just as 'learning from experience means learning to adhere to practices and standards that remain unchallenged' (Buchmann & Schwille, 1983, p. 38) or as Bourdieu (1971) labelled it the the "paradox of finitude". He claimed:

> The individual who attains an immediate, concrete understanding of the familiar world, of the native atmosphere in which and for which he has been brought up, is thereby deprived of the possibility of appropriating immediately and fully the world that lies outside (p. 205).

Part of the problem has to do with the isolation of teachers from one another and the burden this imposes on exchanging interpretations and making sense of experience. As Lipsky (1980) put it, teachers become ". . . highly subject to street-

level bureaucrats' definition of the situation" (p. 53) because of the difficulty of comparing their situations with those of colleagues. It is only through conferral about concrete examples of teaching made possible through clinical supervision, that the kind of constraints and limitations alluded to here can be addressed and overcome.

(d) Re-focussing and Action

The preceeding discussion has sought to show that teaching is 'framed' by certain notions of the 'practicality ethic' (Doyle & Ponder, 1977) and the 'public servant' (Bullough, Gitlin & Goldstein, 1984) role. Such frames " define an operational space for planning and subsequent actions taken by teachers and students " (Smith & Zantiotis, 1988, p. 9), and rather than teachers being always at the exigencies of external forces, it is in the confrontation of their work that they become invested with the freedom to act autonomously. This does not mean that it is sufficient for them to have merely reflected in a speculative way about the oppressive and disabling nature of classrooms, learning, and teachers' work - there must be an actual committment to changing those circumstances.

I have alluded also to the way in which action needs to be seen as a natural follow-on from reflection. To be a trully reflexive process, clinical supervision must also engage the participants in looking inquiringly at the process of clinical supervision itself. Without being definitive, the kind of questions that need to be kept in mind as participants engage one another with clinical supervision, might include:

To what extent are the practices of clinical supervision **just** in treating teachers as capable of participating fully in the determination of their own destiny ?

- Who is clinical supervision appropriate for ? Who is it supposed to benefit ?
- What does it mean when a teacher continues to react defensively and shows signs of anxiety during clinical supervsion ?
- Does the teacher **have** to admit to having problems for clinical supervision to work?
- Should teachers who 'really need' clinical supervision be coerced into using the process ?
- Should clinical supervision be used as a way of 'rating' teachers or teacher effectiveness?
- How much authenticity does the colleague have to display in disclosing his or her values, biases, beliefs, and experiences about teaching? How aware does the

colleague have to be of these, and how important are they to the success of clinical supervision ?
* How can clinical supervision work where there are status, experiential, and subject matter content differences between teacher and colleague ?
* What can be done to avoid clinical supervision become a ritualistic process ?

To what extent is the process of clinical supervsion **practical** in enabling teachers to discover aspects of their own teaching through action ?

* Can inexperienced teachers work with other inexperienced teachers in clinical supervision ? What part, if any, does experience play ?
* How can teachers tell if clinical supervision is of benefit to them ?
* Is it necessary that the teacher feel that clinical supervison is useful to him or her directly in teaching ?
* Can clinical supervision work when teacher and colleague have fundamentally different values about education and what is is designed to do for children ?

To what extent is clinical supervision **realistic** in acknowledging the nature of school and classroom life ?

* How can teacher and colleague develop the kind of collegial relationship necessary to clinical supervision ? Is this something that preceeds or accompanies clinical supervision ?
* What should others not directly involved in the inter-visitation aspects of clinical supervision be told about what is happening ?
* How can networks of pairs of teachers involved in clinical supervision be developed ?
* What is the critical mass of teachers in any one school that need to be involved if clinical supervision is to be self-sustaining ?
* How can clinical supervision be extended to involve other teachers ?
* What resources does a school have to be prepared to make available if clinical supervison is to have a chance of working ? Can it work without these resources ? (Smyth, 1984b, pp. 47-8).

Note: I wish to express my appreciation to Andrew Gitlin for his helpful, informative and perceptive comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

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